

“Alternative” Medicine? What’s That?

by Tal Davis

“I’m sorry, Son, but you seriously sprained your knee when you slid into third base. You’ll have to stay off it for at least six weeks!”

That was the last thing any sports-loving boy wanted to hear just one week before summer vacation, but that’s what my doctor told me. So, for a good part of that summer, I hobbled around on crutches watching my friends play baseball and doing other fun things. I knew, however, that obeying my doctor’s order was the only way my knee would completely heal.

Injuries are an inevitable part of life for boys and girls who play sports. Nearly all athletes must consult a doctor or other health care specialist at some point. If you play sports, chances are good you will have to do so as well. When you do, be sure you consult a health care professional who practices proven methods of treatment. Certified sports trainers or qualified medical doctors and nurses are always your best choices.

What Kind of Treatment?

Unfortunately, a growing number of so-called health care providers practice techniques that are highly questionable. Many of them utilize methods not based on science but on a spiritual philosophy that is both unscientific and unchristian. It’s called the New Age movement.

Most New Age health care (sometimes incorrectly called “alternative medicine”) is based on the idea that the human body contains invisible fields of spiritual energy that get out of balance when a person gets sick or is injured. New Age health care providers, using various unusual techniques, claim they can restore the proper balance of these bodily forces and bring about healing.

One popular technique is called **“reflexology”** and is based on the notion that rubbing a person’s feet can cure diseases in other parts of the body. Another practice called **“homeopathy”** follows the theory that



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giving a person tiny doses of a specific disease will cure them of it.

Practitioners of **“iridology”** claim they determine any ailment by simply looking in the person’s eyes. Others use a strange approach called **“therapeutic touch”** (not to be confused with “therapeutic massage”). Actually they never touch the patient at all! They simply magically wave their hands a few inches above the patient’s body.

No Need for “Alternative” Treatments

None of these or any other New Age methods have scientific validity. These “treatments” conflict with the Bible’s teaching. Neither science nor Scripture teaches there are spiritual energy fields in the human body that need balancing.

In any case, Christian athletes should practice healthy habits and pray for healing when needed. They should also seek treatment from trained health care and medical professionals and stay clear of “alternative” New Age methods. 